

MFR: Investigation of Hotspur, Callaghan, and Warburton Islands, Annette
Colt Denfeld, EE-II
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- A. Introduction: Hotspur, Callaghan, and Warburton Islands are small islands off Annette Island. They served as World War II observation posts, to provide advance warning of enemy ships and aircraft. On each island was a timber observation tower, operations hut (Quonset or wood frame), and barracks. These observation huts were in operation from 1942 to 1944. They were abandoned at the end of the war. No use has been made of the facilities and none of the islands are occupied.
- B. Field Investigation: On April 8, 1998 the following individuals inspected each island and searched for evidence of contamination, POL drums, underground storage tanks, unsafe debris, or other items requiring cleanup under the DERP-FUDS program:

Colt Denfeld, FUDS, engineer manager
Michael Davis, FUDS, technician
Russell Renk, FAA environmental program
Garth Beyette, FAA environmental program
Callie Ridolfi, Ridolfi Engineering, Seattle, Metlakatla Indians engineer

The islands were reached by a chartered boat (chartered and paid by the FAA).

C. Hotspur Island:

The first island investigation was Hotspur. It is located in Felice Strait, south of Tamgas Harbor, Annette Island. The island is heavily wooded with two mountains. The observation post was on the northern peak. It had included an observation tower, Quonset hut barracks (9-man), and Quonset hut administration and mess hall building. Surviving are the two Quonset huts, the tower has collapsed and rotted away. The Quonset huts are standing and not unsafe.

The observation post site and surrounding areas were searched. No fuel drums were found nor any visual signs of contamination. There were no locations at which chemical sampling was appropriate, based upon the lush forest growth and no evidence to suggest contamination. The entire inspection team, including the Metlakatla Indian Community engineer agreed that there was no reason to sample and no required environmental restoration.

D. Callaghan Island:

This island was visited next. The observation post was on the north side of this small island. Here the Quonset hut was collapsed, the tower rotted away, and one wood frame hut collapsed and in an advanced state of decay.

There was no evidence of contamination. This island is also heavily-wooded and lush vegetation. There were no 55-gallon drums, fuel facilities, or other features that would suggest that chemical sampling was appropriate. The inspection team searched any areas in which sampling would be required, but found none. The debris is not unsafe.

E. Warburton Island:

Warburton Island is at the north side of Annette Island, about one-mile from the town and small boat harbor. It is a tiny island, about 150-feet in diameter. The observation post was in the center of this relatively flat island. There are two wood frame huts. No fuel drums or any evidence of fuel systems were discovered. The survey group could not find any location to sample. This island's vegetation is lush and there is no distressed vegetation or any other evidence of contamination. There was no evidence on any of the three islands of underground storage tanks, fuel lines, tank saddles, or 55-gallon drums. The islands are clean, there is no garbage, litter, or debris other than the buildings.

F. Conclusion:

These islands are clean, free of debris (except buildings), and with no visual signs of contamination. They are remote and no one resides on them. The survey team was in complete agreement that there was no need for chemical sampling. These islands do not appear to warrant any environmental restoration.